United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1166
19 June 1992

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General meets separately with leaders of the two communities in Cyprus to review current situation on the island; discussions focus on territorial adjustments and displaced persons.

+ Agreement for withdrawal of anti-aircraft weapons and concentration of other weapons to locations under UNPROFOR supervision signed by both Serbian side and Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina; however, fighting continues in Sarajevo, according to United Nations spokesman.

+ Executive Director of UNICEF, James P. Grant, calls for "refinement" in application of sanctions to protect vulnerable groups.

+ Security Council Committee calls for information on violations of mandatory sanctions against Yugoslavia.

+ Negotiations to begin today in Vienna between United Nations and Iraq on resumption of Iraqi petroleum exports to meet essential needs of its civilian population.

+ Secretary-General accepts "with regret" resignation -- for personal reasons -- of Assistant Secretary-General Giandomenico Picco; Personal Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Benon Sevan, to be replaced by Under-Secretary-General in Department for Political Affairs, Sotirios Mousouris, and reassigned to position at Headquarters.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali met separately yesterday with the leaders of the two communities in Cyprus to review the current situation on the island.

According to a United Nations Spokesman, the proximity talks would focus, as of today, on the issues of territorial adjustments and displaced persons, in accordance with Security Council resolution 750 (1992). The meetings were aimed at "reaching an agreement on the set of ideas of an overall framework agreement as an integrated whole" and were expected to continue over the next

(more)

few days. The Council called on the Secretary-General to report by July on the outcome of his efforts and to seek its direct support whenever necessary.

The "set of ideas" emerged from talks in 1991 between representatives both of the Greek and the Turkish Cypriot communities and the Greek and Turkish Governments. They incorporate the understanding that Cyprus is the common home of the two communities, each a federated state, and envisage a federal government that could not encroach upon the powers of the federated states. The text also states that the solution must respect the cultural, religious, social and linguistic identity of each community.

* * *

Agreement for withdrawal of anti-aircraft weapons and concentration of other weapons to locations under the supervision of the United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR) has now been signed by both the Serbian side and the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, a United Nations spokesman said today.

Although there was now an agreement, the spokesman said there was "still severe shelling and fighting near the United Nations headquarters today".

The advance team of military observers, led by Chief of Staff of UNPROFOR, Brigadier General Louis MacKenzie, has been trying for the last two weeks to negotiate an agreement which would ensure the unimpeded delivery of humanitarian supplies to the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina through Sarajevo airport.

The Secretary-General will submit a report to the Security Council later today on the most recent developments in Sarajevo.

* * *

Humanitarian agencies should be given expanded resources to meet the essential needs of children and mothers who were badly affected by the application of sanctions which were "directed at influencing the actions of others", James P. Grant, Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has told its Executive Board.

Mr. Grant was responding to questions raised during the general debate, which was held on 15 and 16 June. He said the tool of sanctions needed to be refined and mechanisms should be found "to protect the most vulnerable, innocent groups in society". He also called for more creative solutions to spare children from the scourge of armed conflict.

Touching on the impact of debt and poverty on the world's children, Mr. Grant said the goals for children could be achieved in many countries if viable solutions to the debt problem could be found, including debt cancellation. The upcoming International Conference on Assistance to African Children would be the single most important event in 1992 for implementing the goals of the 1990 World Summit for Children, he said.

(more)

* * *

The Security Council Committee on Yugoslavia decided at a meeting yesterday to appeal for any information on violations, or suspected violations, of the mandatory sanctions against Yugoslavia. The Committee called on national and international organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, and interested individuals "that may possess or come across" any information relating to violations or alleged violations of the sanctions.

* * *

Negotiations are expected to begin today in Vienna between the United Nations and Iraq on the resumption of petroleum exports by that country to meet the essential needs of its civilian population.

The United Nations delegation is led by Assistant Secretary-General, Giandomenico Picco, while the Iraqi side will be headed by Ambassador Abdul Amir A. Al-Anbari, who has led previous delegations to the talks.

Under resolution 706 (1991), the Security Council stipulated terms for the limited sale of Iraqi oil and oil products under strict conditions and close United Nations monitoring. The resolution provides that Iraq's oil could be sold for a six-month period with full payment by the puchasers to be deposited into an escrow account controlled by the United Nations. Funds would then be allocated from that account to purchase essential foodstuffs and supplies and to meet Iraq's financial obligations under previous Council resolutions.

* * *

Assistant Secretary-General Picco has submitted his resignation -- for personal reasons -- a request the Secretary-General has accepted "with regret".

According to a United Nations spokesman today, the Secretary-General wished to thank Mr. Picco for his "exemplary service on behalf of the Organization". Mr. Picco will be leaving towards the end of next month.

In separate news, the Secretary-General has decided to recall his Personal Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Benon Sevan, to Headquarters. Under-Secretary-General in the Department for Political Affairs, Sotirios Mousouris, would replace Mr. Sevan who would be reassigned to a position in the Secretariat shortly, the spokesman said.

* *** *